

# IVVENILIA

OR  
CERTAINE  
PARADOXES  
AND  
PROBLEMES.

WRITTEN BY

I. DONNE.

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*The second Edition, corrected.*

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## PARADOXES.

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PARA-



# PARADOXES.

## I.

### *A Defence of Womens Inconstancy.*



That Women are *In-*  
*constant*, I with any  
man confesse, but that  
*Inconstancy* is a bad  
quality, I against any  
man will maintaine:  
For every thing as it  
is one better than a-  
nother, so is it fuller  
of *change*; The *Hea-*  
*vens* themselves continually turne, the *Starres*  
move, the *Moone* changeth; *Fire* whirleth, *Ayre*  
flyeth, *Water* ebbs and flowes, the face of the  
*Earth* altereth her lookes, *time* stayes not; the  
*Colour* that is most light, will take most dyes:

so

so in Men, they that have the most reason are the most inalterable in their designs, and the darkest or most ignorant, do seldome change; therefore Women changing more than Men, have also more *Reason*. They cannot be immutable like stocks, like stones, like the Earths dull Center; Gold that lyeth still, rusteth; Water, corrupteth; Aire that moveth not, poysoneth; then why should that which is the perfection of other things, be imputed to Women as greatest imperfection? Because thereby they deceive men. Are not your wits pleased with those jests, which coozen your expectation? You can call it Pleasure to be beguild in troubles, and in the most excellent toy in the world, you call it Treachery: I would you had your *Mistresses* so constant, that they would never change, no not so much as their *smocks*, then should you see what sluttish vertue, *Constancy* were. *Inconstancy* is a most commendable and cleanly quality, and Women in this quality are farre more absolute than the Heavens, than the Starres, Moone, or any thing beneath it; for long observation hath pickt certainty out of their mutability. The Learned are so well acquainted with the Starres, Signes and Planets, that they make them but Characters, to reade the meaning of the Heaven in his owne forehead. Every simple Fellow can bespeake the change of the *Moone* a great while beforehand: but I would faine have the learnedst man



man so skilfull, as to tell when the simplest Woman meaneth to varie. Learning affords no rules to know, much lesse knowledge to rule the minde of a Woman: For as *Philosophy* teacheth us, that *Light things doe alwayes tend upwards*, and *heavy things decline downeward*; Experience teacheth us otherwise, that the disposition of a *Light Woman*, is to fall downe, the nature of Women being contrary to all Art and Nature. Women are like *Flies*, which feed among us at our Table, or *Fleas* sucking our very blood, who leave not our most retired places free from their familiarity, yet for all their fellowship will they never bee tamed nor commanded by us. Women are like the *Sunne*, which is violently carryed one way, yet hath a proper course contrary: so though they, by the mastery of some over-ruling churlish Husbands, are forced to his Byas, yet have they a motion of their owne, which their Husbands never know of. It is the nature of nice and fastidious mindes to know things onely to bee weary of them: Women by their slye *changeablenesse*, and pleasing *doubleness*, prevent even the mislike of those, for they can never be so well knowne, but that there is still more unknowne. Every Woman is a *Science*; for hee that plods upon a Woman all his life long, shall at length find himselfe short of the knowledge of her: they are borne to take downe the pride of wit, and ambition of wisdom, making

king *fooles* wise in the adventuring to winne them, *wisemen* *fooles* in conceit of losing their labours; witty men starke mad, being confounded with their uncertaineties. *Philosophers* write against them for spight, not desert, that having attained to some knowledge in all other things, in them onely they know nothing, but are meerely ignorant: *Active* and *Experienced* men raile against them, because they love in their livelesse and decrepit age, when all goodnesse leaves them. These envious *Liberall* ballad against them, because having nothing in themselves able to deserve their love, they maliciously discommend all they cannot obtaine, thinking to make men beleieve they know much, because they are able to dispraise much, and rage against *Inconstancy*, when they were never admitted into so much favour as to be forsaken. In mine Opinion such men are happy that Women are *Inconstant*, for so may they chance to bee beloved of some excellent Women (when it comes to their turne) out of their *Inconstancy* and mutability, though not out of their owne desert. And what reason is there to clog any Woman with one Man, bee hee never so singular? Women had rather, and it is farre better and more Iudiciall to enjoy all the vertues in severall Men, than but some of them in one, for otherwise they lose their taste, like divers sorts of meat minced together in one dish: and to have all excellencies

cies in one Man (if it were possible) is *Confusion* and *Diversity*. Now who can deny, but such as are obstinately bent to undervalue their worth, are those that have not soule enough to comprehend their excellency, Women being the most excellentest Creatures, in that Man is able to subject all things else, and to grow wise in every thing, but still persists a foole in Woman? The greatest *Scholler*, if hee once take a Wife, is found so unlearned, that he must begin his *Horne-booke*, and all is by *Inconstancy*. To conclude therefore; this name of *Inconstancy*, which hath so much beene poisoned with slaunders, ought to bee changed into *variety*, for the which the world is so delightfull, and a woman for that the most delightfull thing in this world.



## II.

*That Women ought to paint:*



**F**oulness is Lothsome: can that be so which helps it? who forbids his Beloved to gird in her waste? to mend by shooing her uneven lameness? to burnish her teeth? or to perfume her breath? yet that

the Face bee more precisely regarded, it concerns more : For as open confessing sinners are alwaies punished, but the wary and concealing offenders without wittnesse doe it also without punishment, so the secret parts needs the lesse respect; but of the Face, discovered to all Examinations and surveyes, there is not too nice a Iealousie. Nor doth it onely draw the busie eyes, but it is subiect to the diuine touch of all, to *kissing*, the strange and mysticall union of soules. If thee should prostitute her selfe to a more unworthy Man than thy selfe, how earnestly and justly wouldst thou exclaime : that for want of this easier and ready way of repairing, to betray her body to ruine and deformity (the tyrannous Ravishers, and sodaine Desflourers of all Women) what a heynous Adultery is it? What thou lovest in her face is colour, and *painting* gives that, but thou hatest it, not because it is, but because thou knowest it. Foole, whom ignorance makes happy, the Starres, the Sunne, the Skye whom thou admirest, alas, have no colour, but are faire, because they seeme to bee coloured : If this seeming will not satisfie thee in her, thou hast good assurance of her colour, when thou seest her lay it on. If her face bee painted on a Boord or Wall, thou wilt love it, and the Boord, and the Wall : Canst thou loath it then when it speakes, smiles, and kisses, because it is painted? Are

wee not more delighted with seeing Birds,  
 Fruites, and Beasts *painted* then wee are with  
 Naturalls? And doe wee not with pleasure  
 behold the *painted* shape of Monsters and  
 Divels, whom true, wee durst not regard?  
 Wee reparaire the ruines of our houses, but  
 first cold tempests warnes us of it, and bytes  
 us through it; wee mend the wracke and  
 stains of our Apparell, but first our eyes, and  
 other bodies are offended; but by this provi-  
 dence of Women, this is prevented. If in  
*kissing* or *breathing* upon her, the *painting* fall  
 off, thou art angry, wilt thou be so, if it sticke  
 on? Thou didst love her, If thou beginnest to  
 hate her, then 'tis because shee is not *painted*.  
 If thou wilt say now, thou didst hate her be-  
 fore, thou didst hate her and love her together,  
 bee constant in something, and love her who  
 shewes her great *love* to thee, in taking this  
 paines to seeme *lovely* to thee.

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III. That



## III.

*That by Discord things  
increase.*

*Nullos esse Deos, inane Cælum  
Affirmat Calius, probatq; quod se  
Factum vidit, dum negat hæc, beatum.*



O I assevere this the more boldly,  
because while I maintaine it, and  
feele the *Contrary* repugnancies and  
*adverse* fightings of the *Elements* in  
my *Body*, my *Body* increaseth;  
and whilst I differ from common opinions by  
this *Discord*, the number of my *Paradoxes* in-  
creaseth. All the rich benefits we can frame to  
our selves in *Concord*, is but an *Even* conservati-  
on of things; in which *Evennesse* wee can ex-  
pect no *change*, no *motion*, therefore no *increase*  
or *augmentation*, which is a *member* of *motion*.  
And if this *unity* and *peace* can give *increase* to  
things, how mightily is *discord* and *war* to that  
purpose, which are indeed the onely ordinary  
*Parents* of *peace*. *Discord* is never so barren that  
it

it affords no fruit ; for the *fall* of one *estate* is at the worst the *increaser* of another, because it is as impossible to finde a *discommodity* without *advantage*, as to finde *Corruption* without *Generation* : But it is the *Nature* and *Office* of *Concord* to *preserve* onely, which property when it leaves, it differs from it selfe, which is the greatest *discord* of all. All *Victories* and *Emperies* gained by *warre*, and all *Iudiciall* decidings of doubts in *peace*, I doe claime children of *Discord*. And who can deny but *Controversies* in *Religion* are growne greater by *discord*, and not the *Controversie*, but *Religion* it selfe : For in a troubled *misery* Men are alwaies more *Religious* then in a *secure peace*. The number of good men, the onely charitable nourishers of *Concord*, wee see is thinne, and daily melts and waines ; but of bad *discording* it is infinite, and growes houely. Wee are ascertainment of all *Disputable* doubts, onely by *arguing* and differing in *Opinion*, and if formall *disputation* (which is but a painted, counterfeit, and dissembled *discord*) can worke us this benefit, what shall not a full and maine *discord* accomplish ? Truly me thinkes I owe a *devotion*, yea a *sacrifice* to *discord*, for casting that *Ball* upon *Ida*, and for all that businesse of *Troy*, whom ruin'd I admire more then *Babylon*, *Rome*, or *Quinzay*, removed *Corners*, not onely fulfilled with her *fame*, but with *Cities* and *Thrones* planted by her *Fugitives*. Lastly, between *Comardice* and *despaire*, *Valour* is gendred ;  
and

and so the *Discord* of *Extreames* begets all virtues, but of the *like things* there is no issue without a miracle :

*Vxor pessima, pessimus maritus*

*Adior tam male convenire.*

Hee wonders that betweene two so *like*, there could be any *discord*, yet perchance for all this *discord* there was nere the lesse increase.



#### IV.

*That good is more common  
then evill.*



Have not been so pittifully tired with any *vanity*, as with silly *Old Mens* exclaiming against these times, and extolling their owne : Alas ! they betray themselves, for if the *times* be changed, their manners have changed them. But their senses are to pleasures, as sick *Mens* tastes are to *Liquors*; for indeed no new thing is done in the world, all things are what, and as they were, and Good is as ever it was, more plenteous, and must of necessity be more common then evill, because it hath this for nature and perfection to bee common. It makes



makes Love to all *Natures*, all, all affect it. So that in the *Worlds* early *Infancy*, there was a time when nothing was *evill*, but if this *World* shall suffer *dotage* in the extreamest *crookednesse* thereof, there shall be no time when nothing shalbe good. It dares appeare and spread, and glister in the *World*, but *evill* buries it selfe in night and darknesse, and is chastised and suppressed when good is cherished and rewarded. And as *Imbroderers*, *Lapidaries*, and other *Artisans*, can by all things adorne their workes; for by adding better things, the better they shew in *Lust* and in *Eminency*; so good doth not onely prostrate her *amiablenesse* to all, but refuses no end, no not of her utter contrary *evill*, that shee may bee the more common to us. For *evill manners* are parents of good *Laves*; and in every *evill* there is an excellence, which (in common speech) we call good. For the *fashions* of *habies*, for our moving in *gestures*, for *phrases* in our *speech*, we say they were good as long as they were used, that is, as long as they were common; and wee eate, wee waske, onely when it is, or seemes good to doe so. All *faire*, all *profitable*, all *vertuous*, is good, and these three things I thinke embrace all things, but their utter *contraries*; of which also *faire* may be rich and *vertuous*; *poore* may bee *vertuous* and *faire*; *virious* may be *faire* and *rich*; so that good hath this good meanes to be common; that some subjects she can possesse intirely; and in subjects *poysoned* with *evill*, she can humbly stoop

to accompany the *evil*. And of *indifferent* things many things are become perfectly good by being *common*, as *customs* by use are made binding *Lawes*. But I remember nothing that is therefore *ill*, because it is *common*, but *Women*, of whom also; *They that are most common, are the best of that Occupation they professe.*



## V.

*That all things kill themselves.*



O affect, yea to effect their owne death all living things are importuned, not by *Nature* only which perfects them, but by *Art* and *Education*, which perfects her. *Plants* quickened and inhabited by the most unworthy *soule*, which therefore neither *will* nor *worke*, affect an end, a perfection, a death; this they spend their *spirits* to attaine, this attained, they languish and wither. And by how much more they are by mans *Industry* warmed, cherished, and pampered; so much the more early they climbe to this perfection, this death. And if amongst *Men* not to defend be to kill, what a hainous

hainous *selfe-murther* is it, not to defend it *selfe*. This defence because *Beasts* neglect, they kill themselves, because they exceed us in *number*, *strength*, and a *lawlesse liberty*: yea, of *Horses* and other beasts, they that inherit *most courage* by being bred of *gallantest parents*, and by *Artificial nursing* are bettered, will runne to their owne deaths, neither sollicitated by *spurres* which they need not, nor by *honour* which they apprehend not. If then the *valiant* kill himselfe, who can excuse the *comard*? Or how shall *Man* bee free from this, since the *first Man* taught us this, except we cannot kill our selves, because he kill'd us all. Yet lest something should repaire this *Common ruine*, we daily kill our *bodies* with *surfeits*, and our *minde*s with *anguisbes*. Of our *powers*, *remembring* kills our *memory*; Of *Affections*, *Lusting* our *lust*; Of *vertues*, *Giving* kills *liberality*. And if these kill themselves, they do it in their best & *supreme perfection*: for after *perfection* immediately follows *excesse*, which changeth the *natures* and the *names*, and makes them not the same things. If then the best things kill themselves soonest, (for no *affection* endures, and all things labour to this *perfection*) all travell to their owne death, yea the frame of the whole *world*, if it were possible for *God* to be idle, yet because it *began*, must *dye*. Then in this *idlenesse* imagined in *God*, what could kill the *world* but it *selfe*, since out of it, nothing is?



## VI.

*That it is possible to find some vertue in some Women.*



Am not of that feard *Impudence* that I dare defend *Women*, or pronounce them good; yet we see *Physicians* allow some vertue in every *poysan*. Alas! why should we except *Women*? since certainly, they are good for *Physicke* at least, so as some *wine* is good for a *feaver*. And though they be the *Occasioners* of many *finnes*, they are also the *Punishers* and *Revengers* of the same *finnes*: For I have seldome seene one which consumes his *substance* and *body* upon them, escape *diseases*, or *beggery*; and this is their *Iustice*. And if *suum cuiq;* dare, bee the fulfilling of all *Civill Iustice*, they are *most just*; for they deny that which is theirs to no man.

*Tanquam non liceat nulla puella negat.*

And who may doubt of great wisdom in them, that doth but observe with how much labour and cunning our *Iusticers* and other *dispensers* of the *Laws* study to imbrace them: and how zealously

zealously our *Preachers* dehort men from them, onely by urging their *subtillties*, and *policies*, and *wisedome*, which are in them? Or who can deny them a good measure of *Fortitude*, if hee consider how *valiant men* they have overthrowne, and being themselves overthrowne, how much and how *patiently* they *bear*? And though they bee most *intemperate*, I care not, for I undertooke to furnish them with *some vertue*, not with *all*. *Necessity*, which makes even bad things good, *prevail* also for them, for wee must say of them, as of some sharpe pinching *Lawes*; If men were free from *infirmities*, they were needlesse. These or none must serve for *reasons*, and it is my great happinesse that *Examples* prove not *Rules*, for to confirme this *Opinion*, the World yeelds not one *Example*.

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C. 2.

VII. That



# VII.

## That Old men are more fantastike then Young.



H O reads this *Paradox* but thinks mee more *fantastike* now, than I was yesterday, when I did not think thus : And if one day make this sensible change in men, what will the burthen of many yeeres ? To bee *fantastike* in young men is conceiptfull *dissemperature*, and a witty *madnesse* ; but in old men, whose senses are withered, it becomes *naturall*, therefore more full and perfect. For as when wee sleepe our *fancy* is most strong ; so it is in age, which is a *slumber* of the deepe sleepe of death. They taxe us of *Inconstancy*, which in themselves young they allowed ; so that reprooving that which they did approve, their *Inconstancy* exceedeth ours, because they have changed *once more* then wee. Yea, they are more idly busied in *conceited* *apparell* then wee ; for we, when we are *melancholy*, weare *blacke* ; when *lustie*, *greene* ; when *forsaken*, *ranney* ; pleasing our owne *inward* affections, leaving them to others *indifferent* ; but they pre-  
scribe

scribe lawes, and constraîne the *Noble*, the *Scholler*, the *Merchant*, and all *Estates* to a certaine habit. The old men of our time have changed with patience their owne bodies, much of their lawes, much of their languages; yea their Religion, yet they accuse us. To be *Amorous* is proper and naturall in a young man, but in an old man most fantastike. And that ridling humour of *Iealousie*, which seekes and would not finde, which requires and repents his knowledge, is in them most common, yet most fantastike. Yea, that which falls never in young men, is in them most fantastike and naturall, that is, *Covetousnesse*; even at their journeyes end to make great provision. Is any habit of young men so fantastike, as in the hottest seasons to be double-gonned or hooded like our *Elders*? Or seemes it so ridiculous to weare long haire, as to weare none. Truly, as among the *Philosophers*, the *Skeptike*, which doubts all, was more contentious, then either the *Dogmatike* which affirms, or *Academike* which denies all; so are these uncertaine *Elders*, which both call them fantastike which follow others inventions, and them also which are led by their owne humorous suggestion, more fantastike then others.

## VIII. That



## VIII.

*That Nature is our worst  
Guide.*



Hal she be *guide* to all *Creatures*, which is her selfe one ? Or if she also have a *guide*, shall any *Creature* have a better *guide* then wee ? The affections of *lust* and *anger*, yea even to *erre* is *naturall* : shall we follow these ? Can shee be a good *guide* to us, which hath corrupted not us onely but her selfe ? Was not the *first man*, by the desire of *knowledge*, corrupted even in the *whitest integrity* of *Nature* ? And did not *Nature* (if *Nature* did any thing) infuse into him this desire of *knowledge*, and so this *corruption* in him, into us ? If by *Nature* wee shall understand our *essence*, our *definition*, or *reason*, *nobleneſſe*, then this being alike common to all (the *Idiot* and the *Wizard* being equally *reasonable*) why should not all men having equally all one *nature*, follow one course ? Or if we shall understand our *inclinations*, alas ! how unable a *guide* is that which followes the *temperature* of our *flimie bodies* ?



dies? for we cannot say that we derive our *inclinations, our mindes, or soules* from our *Parents* by any way: to say that it is *all from all*, is *error in reason*, for then with the first nothing remains; or is a *part from all*, is *error in experience*, for then this *part* equally imparted to many children, would like *Gavel-kind lands*, in few generations become nothing; or to say it by *communication*, is *error in Divinity*, for to communicate the *ability* of communicating *whole essence* with any but God, is utter *blasphemy*. And if thou hit thy *Fathers nature and inclination*, he also had his *Fathers*, and so climbing up, all comes of one man, and have one *nature*, all shall imbrace one course; but that cannot bee, therefore our *complexions* and *whole bodies*, wee inherit from *Parents*, our *inclinations* and *minds* follow that: For our *minde* is heavy in our *bodies afflictions*, and rejoyceth in our *bodies pleasure*: how then shall this *nature* governe us, that is governed by the worst part of us? *Nature* though oft chased away, it will returne; 'tis true, but those good *motions* and *inspirations* which be our guides must bee *nooed, courted, and welcomed*, or else they abandon us. And that old *Axiome, nihil invita, &c.* must not be said thou shalt, but thou wilt doe nothing against *Nature*; so unwilling he notes us to curbe our *naturall appetites*. Wee call our *bastards* alwayes our *naturall issue*, and we define a *Foole* by nothing so ordinary, as by the name of *naturall*. And that poore knowledge

ledge whereby we conceive what *raine* is, what *wind*, what *thunder*, wee call *Metaphysicke*, *super-naturall*; such *small* things, such *no* things doe we allow to our pliant *Natures* apprehension. Lastly, by following her, we lose the pleasant, and lawfull commodities of this life, for wee shall drinke water and eate rootes, and those not sweet and delicate, as now by Mans *art* and *industry* they are made: we shall lose all the necessities of *societies*, *lawes*, *arts*, and *sciences*, which are all the workmanship of *Man*: yea we shall lack the last *best* refuge of misery, *death*; because *no death* is *naturall*: for if yee will not dare to call all *death* *violent* ( though I see not why *sicknesses* be not *violences* ) yet *causes* of all *deaths* proceed of the defect of that which *nature* made perfect, and would preserve, and therefore all against *nature*.



## IX.

*That only Cowards dare dye.*



*Extremes* are equally removed from the *meane*; so that headlong *desperatenesse* as much offends true *valour*, as backward *Cowardice*: of which sort I reckon justly all *un-inforced deaths*. When will your *valiant* man dye of necessity?

cessity? so Cowards suffer what cannot be avoided: and to runne into death *unimportun'd*, is to runne into the first condemned desperatenesse. Will he dye when he is rich and happy? then by living he may doe more good: and in afflictions and miseries, death is the chosen refuge of Cowards.

*Fortiter ille facit, qui miser esse potest.*

But it is taught and practised among our Gallants, that rather than our reputations suffer any maine, or we any misery, wee shall offer our breasts to the Cannons mouth, yea to our swords points: And this seemes a very brave and a very climbing (which is a Cowardly, earthly, and indeed a very groveling) spirit. Why doe they chaine these slaves to the Gallies, but that they thrust their deaths, and would at every loose leape into the sea? Why doe they take weapons from condemned men, but to barre them of that ease which Cowards affect, a speedy death. Truly this life is a tempest, and a warfare, and he which dares dye, to escape the anguish of it, seems to mee, but so valiant, as hee which dares hang himselfe, lest hee be prest to the warres. I have seene one in that extremity of melancholy, which was then become madnesse, to make his owne breath an Instrument to stay his breath, and labour to choake himselfe, but alas! he was mad. And we knew another that languished under the oppression of a poore disgrace so much, that hee tooke more paines to dye, then would have

D

served

serued to have nourished life and spirit enough  
 to have outlived his disgrace. What Poole will  
 call this Cowardinesse, Valour? or this Rashnesse,  
 Humility? And lastly, of these men which dye  
 the Allegoricall death of entering into Religion,  
 how few are found fit for any shew of valiancy;  
 but onely a soft and supple metall, made onely for  
 Cowardly solitarie life.



## X.

*That a Wise Man is knowne by  
 much laughing.*

**R**ide, si sapias, & puella ride; If thou  
 beest wise, laugh; for since the  
 powers of discourse, reason, and  
 laughter, bee equally proper unto  
 Man onely, why shall not hee be  
 onely most wise, which hath most  
 use of laughing, aswell as he which hath most of  
 reasoning and discoursing? I alwaies did, and  
 shall understand that Adage;

*Per risum multum possis cognoscere stultum.*  
 That by much laughing thou maist know there  
 is a foole, not, that the laughers are fooles, but that  
 among them there is some foole, at whom wise  
 men laugh: which moved Erasmus to put this

as his first Argument in the mouth of his Jolly, that *shee made Beholders laugh*: for *fools* are the most laughed at, and laugh the least themselves of any. And *Nature* saw this faculty to bee so necessary in man, that *shee* hath beene content that by more causes we should be importuned to laugh, then to the exercise of any other power; for things in themselves utterly contrary, beget this effect; for wee laugh both at *vitty* and *absurd* things. At both which sorts I have seene Men laugh so long, and so earnestly, that at last they have wept that they could laugh no more. And therefore the Poet having described the quietnesse of a wise retired man, saith in one, what we have said before in many lines; *Quid facit Curius rursus rider*. We have received that even the extremity of laughing, yea of weeping also, hath beene accounted wisdom: And that *Democritus* and *Heraclitus*, the lovers of those Extremes, have been called lovers of wisdom. Now among our wisemen I doubt not, but many would be found who would laugh at *Heraclitus* weeping, none which weep at *Democritus* laughing. At the hearing of Comedies or other witty reports, I have noted some, which not understanding jests &c. have yet chosen this as the best means to seeme wise and understanding, to laugh when their Companions laugh; and I have presumed them ignorant, whom I have seene unmoved. A foole if he come into a Princes Court, and see a gay man leaning at the wall, so glistering, and so painted in

many colours that he is hardly discerned from one of the pictures in the Arras, hanging his body like an Iron-bound-chest, girt in and thicke ribb'd with broad gold laces, may (and commonly doth) envy him. But alas ! shall a wiseman, which may not onely not envy, but not pittie this monster, do nothing ? Yes, let him laugh. And if one of these hot cholerike firebrands, which nourish themselves by quarrelling, and kindling others, spit upon a foole one sparke of disgrace, he, like a that che house quickly burning, may bee angry; but the wiseman, as cold as the Salamander, may not onely not be angry with him, but not be sorry for him; therefore let him laugh : so he shall be knowne a Man, because he can laugh, a wise Man that hee knowes at what to laugh, and a valiant Man that he dares laugh : for he that laughs is justly reputed more wise, then at whom it is laughed. And hence I thinke proceeds that which in these latter formall times I have much noted ; that now when our superstitious civility of manners is become a mutuall tickling flattery of one another, almost every man affecteth an humour of jesting, and is content to be dejected; and to deform himselfe, yea become foole to no other end that I can spie, but to give his wise Companion occasion to laugh; and to shew themselves in promptnesse of laughing is so great in wisemen, that I thinke all wisemen, if any wiseman do readethis Paradox, will laugh both at it and me.

XI.

*That the gifts of the Body are better then those of the Minde.*

**S**ay againe, that the body makes the minde, not that it created it a minde, but formes it a good or a bad mind; and this minde may be confounded with soule without any violence or iniustice to Reason or Philosophy: then the soule it seemes is enabled by our body, not this by it. My Body lieth my soule to see the worlds beauties through mine eyes; to heare pleasant things through mine eares; and affords it an Organ for the conveiance of all perceivable delight. But alas! my soule cannot make any part, that is not of it selfe disposed, to see or heare, though without doubt she be as able and as willing to see behind as before. Now if my soule would say, that she enables any part to taste these pleasures, but is her selfe onely delighted with those rich sweetneses which her inward eyes and senses apprehend, she should dissemble; for I see her often solaced with beauties, which she sees through mine eyes, and with musicke which through



through mine eares she heares. This perfection  
 then my body hath, that it can impart to my  
 minde all his pleasures; and my minde hath still  
 many, that she can neither teach my indisposed  
 part her faculties, nor to the best espoused parts  
 shew it beauty of Angels, of Musicke, of Spheres,  
 whereof she boasts the contemplation. Are cha-  
 stity, temperance, and fortitude gifts of the mind?  
 I appeale to Physicians whether the cause of these  
 be not in the body; health is the gift of the body,  
 and patience in sicknesse the gift of the minde:  
 then who will say that patience is as good a hap-  
 pinesse, as health, when wee must be extremely  
 miserable to purchase this happinesse. And for  
 nourishing of civill societies and mutuall love a-  
 mongst men, which is our chiefe end while wee  
 are men; I say, this beauty, presence, and proporti-  
 on of the body, hath a more masculine force in be-  
 getting this love, then the vertues of the minde:  
 for it strikes us suddenly, and possesseth us imme-  
 diately; when to know those vertues requires  
 some Iudgement in him which shall discern, a  
 long time and conversation betwene them. And  
 even at last how much of our faith and beleefe  
 shall we be driven to bestow, to assure our selves  
 that these vertues are not counterfeited: for it is  
 the same to be, and seeme vertuous, because that  
 he that hath no vertue, can dissemble none, but  
 he which hath a little, may gild and enamell, yea  
 and transforme much vice into vertue: For al-  
 low a man to be sinister and flexible to complaints,  
 which



which are great *vertuous* gifts of the *minde*, this *discretion* will be to him the *soule* & *Elixir* of all *vertues*, so that touched with this, even *pride* shal be made *humility*; and *Cowardice*, honourable and wise *valour*. But in things *seene* there is not this danger, for the *body* which thou lovest and esteemest *faire*, is *faire*; certainly if it bee not *faire* in *perfection*, yet it is *faire* in the same degree that thy *Judgement* is good. And in a *faire* *body*, I doe seldome suspect a *disproportioned* *minde*, and as seldome hope for a *good* in a *deformed*. When I see a goodly *house*, I assure my selfe of a *worthy* *possession*, from a *ruinous* *weather-beaten* *building* I turn away, because it seems either stuffed with *varlets* as a *Prison*, or handled by an *unworthy* and *negligent* *tenant*, that so suffers the *waste* thereof. And truly the gifts of *Fortune*, which are *riches*, are onely *handmaids*, yea *Pandars* of the *bodies* *pleasure*; with their service we nourish *health*, and preserve *dainty*, and wee buy *delights*, so that *vertue* which must be loved for it selfe, and respects no further *end*, is indeed *nothing*: And *riches*, whose *end* is the *good* of the *body*, cannot be so perfectly *good*, as the *end* whereto it levels.

**CERTAIN**

which are great between gifts of the world, this  
 gift will be to him the best & fairest of all  
 others, least touched with this even great  
 beauteous world; and certainly I cannot  
 find it in the world, but in the heart of man  
 it is changed, and the love which thou lovest, and  
 esteemest, is mine, certainly it is not  
 mine, but it is mine, and it is mine, and  
 it is mine, and it is mine, and it is mine,  
 I do not know how to express it, but  
 and as I do not know how to express it,  
 When I see a goodly house, I turn my back  
 and I turn away, because it is not  
 with me, as a house, or handled by an owner,  
 thy and neglect to say, that to suffer the waste  
 thereof. And truly the gift of love, which  
 are richer, are only handwrit, not printed  
 the book of nature; with their service we know  
 health, and private dainties, and we buy light  
 to that love which must be loved for its self,  
 and respects no further end, is indeed worthy  
 And richer whole end is the good of the body, can  
 not be so perfectly good, as the end whereof it is

CERTAIN



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CERTAINE  
**PROBLEMES**  
WRITTEN BY  
I. DONNE.

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## THE PROBLEMES.

- I. *Why have Bastards best Fortune?*
- II *Why Puritans make long Sermons?*
- III. *Why did the Devill reserve Iesuites till these latter dayes.*
- IV. *Why is there more variety of Green, then of any other colour?*
- V. *Why doe Young Lay-men so much study Divinity?*
- VI *Why hath the common Opinion afforded Women Soules?*
- VII *Why are the Fairest, falsest*
- VIII. *Why Venus star only doth cast a shadow?*
- IX. *Why is Venus Starre Multinominous, called both Hesperus and Vesper.*
- X. *Why are new Officers least oppressing?*

PRO-



## PROBLEMES,

## I.

*Why have Bastards best  
Fortune?*

**B**Ecause *Fortune* herselfe is a *whore*, but such are not most indulgent to their *issue*; the old naturall reason (but those meetings in *stolne love* are most *vehement*, and so contribute more *spirit* then the *easie* and *lawfull*) might governe me, but that now I see *Mistresses* are become *domestlike* and *in ordinary*, and they and wives *waite* but by *turnes*, and agree as well as they had lived in the *Arke*. The old Morall reason (that *Bastards* inherit *wickednesse* from their *Parents*, and so are in a better way to *preferment* by having a *stocke* before-hand, then those that build all their *fortune* upon the *poore* and *weake stocke* of *Originall sinne*) might prevaile with me, but that since wee are fallen into such

times, as now the world might spare the Divell, because she could be bad enough without him. I see men scorne to be wicked by example, or to bee beholding to others for their damnation. It seems reasonable, that since Lawes rob them of succession in civill benefits, they should have something else equivalent. As Nature (which is Lawes patterne) having denied Women Constancy to one, hath provided them with cunning to allure many; and so Bastards de jure should have better wits and experience. But besides that by experience wee see many fooles amongst them, wee should take from them one of their chiefest helps to preferment, and we should deny them to be fools; and (that which is onely left) that women chuse worthier men then their husbands, is false de facto, either then it must bee that the Church having removed them from all place in the publike Service of God, they have better meanes then others to be wicked, and so fortunate: Or else because the two greatest powers in this world, the Divell and Princes concur to their greatnesse; the one giving bastardy, the other legitimation: As nature frames and conserves great bodies of contraries. Or the cause is, because they abound most at Court, which is the forge where fortunes are made, or at least the shop where they be sold.

II. Why



## II.

*Why Puritanes make long  
Sermons?*



**I**T needs not for *perspicuousnesse*, for God knowes they are plain enough: nor doe all of them use *Sem-briefe-Accents* for some of them have *crotchets* enough. It may bee they intend not to rise like glorious *Tapers* and *Forches*, but like *Thinne-wretched-sicke-watching-Candles*, which *languish* and are in a *Divine Consumption* from the first minute, yea in their *snuffe*, and *sink* when others are in their more profitable glory. I have thought sometimes, that out of *conscience*, they allow *long measure* to *course ware*. And sometimes, that *usurping* in that place a *liberty* to *speak freely* of *Kings*, they would *raigne* as long as they could. But now I thinke they doe it out of a *zealous imagination*, that, *It is their duty to preach on till their Auditory wake.*

*Why*



## III.

*Why did the Diuel reserve Jesuites  
till these latter dayes.*



I D he know that our Age would  
 deny the Devils possessing, and  
 therefore provided by these to pos-  
 sesse men and kingdomes? Or to  
 end the *disputation* of Schoolemen,  
 why the Divell could not make  
 lice in Egypt; and whether those things hee pre-  
 sentsed there, might be true, hath he sent us a true  
 and reall plague, worse than those ten? Or in o-  
 stentation of the greatnesse of his Kingdome, which  
 even division cannot shake, doth he send us these  
 which disagree with all the rest? Or knowing  
 that our times should discover the Indies, and a-  
 bolish their Idolatry, doth he send these to give  
 them another for it? Or peradventure they have  
 beene in the Roman Church these thousand yeeres,  
 though we have called them by other names.

IV. Why



IV.

*Why is there more variety of Green  
then of other Colours?*



It is because it is the figure of *Youth* wherein nature wuld provide as many green, as youth hath affections; and so present a *Sea-green* for profuse *masters* in voyages; a *Grasse-green* for sudden *new men* enobled from *Grassiers*; and a *Goose-green* for such *Politicians* as pretend to preserve the *Capitol*. Or else *Prophetically* foreseeing an age, wherein they shall all hunt. And for such as *misdemean* themselves a *Willow-green*; For *Magistrates* must aswell have *Fasces* born before them to chastize the *small offences*, as *Secures* to cut off the *great*.



V.

*Why doe young Lay-men so much  
study Divinity.*

It is because others tending busily *Churches* preferment neglect study? Or had the *Church of Rome* shut up all our wayes, till the *Lutherans* broke downe their uttermost *stubborne* *doors*

doores, and the Calvinists picked their *inwardest* and *subtlest lockes*? Surely the *Devill* cannot be such a *Foole* to hope that he shall make this study *contemptible*, by making it *common*. Nor that as the *Dwellers* by the *River Orign* are said (by drawing infinite *ditches* to sprinkle their *barren Country*) to have exhausted and intercepted their *maine channell*, and so lost their more profitable course to the *sea*; so we, by providing every ones *selfe*, *divinity* enough for his *own use*, should neglect our *Teachers* and *Fathers*. Hee cannot hope for better *heresies* then hee hath had, nor was his *Kingdome* ever so much advanced by *debating Religion* (though with some *aspersions* of *Error*) as by a *dull* and *stupid security*, in which many *grosse things* are swallowed. Possible out of such an *ambition* as we have now, to *speake plainly* and *fellow-like* with *Lords* and *Kings*, wee thinke also to acquaint our selves with *Gods secrets*; Or perchance when we study it by *mingling humane respects*, *It is not Divinity*.



## VI.

*Why hath the common Opinion afforded  
Women Soules?*

**I**T is agreed that wee have not so much from them as any *part* of either our *mortall soules* of *sense*, or *growth*; and we deny *soules* to others *equall*

equal to them in all but in speech for which they are beholding to their *bodily instruments* : For perchance an *Oxes* heart, or a *Goates*, or a *Foxes*, or a *Serpents* would speake just so, if it were in the *breast*, and could move that *tongue* and *jawes*. Have they so many *advantages* and *meanes* to hurt us ( for, ever their *loving* destroyed us) that we dare not *displease* them, but give them what they will ? And so when some call them *Angels*, some *Goddesses*, and the *Palpalian Heretikes* made them *Bishops*, wee descend so much with the streame, to allow them *soules* ? Or doe we somewhat (in this dignifying of them) flatter *Princes* and *great Personages* that are so much governed by them ? Or doe we in that *easinesse* and *prodigality*, wherein we daily lose our owne *soules* to we care not whom, so labour to perswade our selves, that sith a *woman* hath a *soule*, a *soule* is no great matter ? Or doe wee lend them *soules* but for *use*, since they for our sakes, give their *soules* againe, and their *bodies* to boote ? Or perchance because the *Devill* ( who is all *soule*) doth most *mischiefe*, and for *convenience* and *proportion*, because they would come neerer him, wee allow them some *soules* ; and so as the *Romanes* naturalized some *Provinces* in revenge, and made them *Romans*, onely for the *burthen* of the *Common-wealth* ; so we have given *women* *soules* onely to make them capable of *damnation* ?

## VII.

*Why are the Fairest, Falsest?*



Meane not of false *Alchimy Beauty*, for then the *question* should be inverted, *Why are the Falsest, Fairest?* It is not onely because they are *much solicited* and *sought for*, so is *gold*, yet it is not so *common*, and this suite to them, should teach them their *value*, and make them more *reserved*. Nor is it because the *delicatest blood* hath the *best spirits*, for what is that to the *flesh*? perchance such *constitutions* have the *best wits*, and there is no *proportionable subject*, for *womens wit*, but *deceit*? doth the *minde* so follow the *temperature* of the *body*, that because those *complexions* are aptest to change, the *mind* is therefore so? Or as *Bells* of the *purest metall* retaine their *tinkling* and *sound*, largest; so the *memory* of the last *pleasure* lasts longer in these, and disposeth them to the next. But sure it is not in the *complexion*, for those that doe but thinke themselves *faire*, are presently inclined to this *multiplicity* of *loves*, which being but *faire in concept* are *false in deed*: and so perchance when they are borne to this *beauty*,  
or

or have made it, or have dream'd it, they easily beleeve all addressees and applications of every man, out of a sense of their owne worthinesse to bee directed to them, which others lesse worthy in their owne thoughts apprehend not, or discredit. But I thinke the true reason is, that being like gold in many properties (as that all snatch at them, but the worst possesse them, that they care not how deepe we dig for them, and that by the Law of nature, *Occupanti conceditur*) they would be like also in this, that as Gold to make it selfe of use admits alloy, so they, that they may bee tractable, mutable, and currant, have to their alloy Falshood.



VIII

Why Venus-starre onely doth  
cast a shadow?



Is it because it is neerer the earth? But they whose profession it is to see that nothing be done in heaven without their consent (as Re—— saies in himsele of Astrologers) have bid Mercury to be neerer. Is it because the workes of Venus want

shadowing, covering, and disguising? But those of *Mercury* need it more; for *Eloquence*, his Occupation, is all shadow and colour; let our life bee a sea, and then our reason and even passions are winde enough to carry us whether we should goe, but *Eloquence* is a storme and tempest that miscarries: and who doubts that *Eloquence* which must perswade people to take a yoke of soveraignty (and then beg and make lawes to tye them faster, and then give money to the intencion, repaire and strengthen it) needs more shadowes and colouring, then to perswade any Man or Woman so that which is naturall. And *Venus* markets are so naturall, that when we sollicite the best way (which is by marriage) our perswasions worke not so much to draw a woman to us, as against her nature to draw her from all other besides. And so when we go against nature, and from *Venus*-work (for marriage is chastity) we need shadowes and colours, but not else. In *Seneca's* time it was a courtesie, an *un-Romane* and a contemptible thing even in a *Matrone*, not to have had a Love beside her husband, which though the Law required not at their hands, yet they did it zealously out of the counsell of custome and fashon, which was veneration of supererogation.


*Et te spectator plusquam delectat Adulter,*  
saith *Martial*: And *Horace*, because many lights would not shew him enough, created many Images of the same Object by rainscoting his chamber with looking-glasses: so that *Venus* flies not  
light,

light, so much as *Mercury*, who creeping into our understanding, our darkenesse would be defeated, if he were perceived. Then either this shadow confesseth that same darke *Melancholy Repentance* which accompanies; or that so violent fires, needs some shadow refreshing, and intermission: Or else light signifying both day and youth, and shadow both night and age, she pronounceth by this that she professeth both all persons and times.



## IX.

*Why is Venus-star multinominous,  
called both Hesperus and Vesper?*

 He *Moone* hath as many names, but not as she is a starre, but as shee hath divers governments; but *Venus* is multinominous to give example to her prostitute disciples, who so often, either to renew or refresh themselves towards lovers, or to disguise themselves from *Magistrates*, are to take new names. It may bee she takes new names after her many functions, for as she is supreme Monarch of all *Sunnes* at large (which is *lust*) so is she joyned in commission with all *Mythologicks*, with *Iuno*, *Diana*, and all others



others for marriage. It may be because of the divers names to her selfe, for her affections have more names than any vice: scilicet; Pollution, Fornication, Adultery, Lay-Incest, Church-Incest, Rape, Sodomy, Mastupration, Masturbation, and a thousand others. Perchance her divers names shewed her appliablenesse to divers men, for Neptune distilled and wet her in love, the Sunne warmes and melts her. Mercury perswaded and swore her, Jupiters authority secured, and Vulcan hammer'd her. As Hesperus she presents you with her *bonum utile*, because it is *wholesome* in the morning: As Vesper with her *bonum delectabile*, because it is *pleasantest* in the evening. And because industrious men rise and indure with the Sunne in their civill businesse, this *Starre* calls them up a little before, and remembers them againe a little after for her businesse; for certainly,

*Venit Hesperus, ite capella:*

was spoken to Lovers in the persons of Goates.

X. Why





## X.

*Why are New Officers least  
oppressing?*

**M** Vt the Old Proverbe, that *Old dogs bite first*, be true in all kinde of dogs? Me thinks the fresh memory they have of the *many* they parted with for the *place*, should hasten them for the *re-imbursing*: And perchance they doe but seeme easier to their *suiters*; who (as all other *Patients*) doe account all change of paine, easie. But if it bee so, it is either because the sodain *sense & contentment* of the *honor* of the *place*, retards and remits the rage of their *profits*, and so having stayed their *stomackes*, they can forbear the second *course* a while: Or having overcome the *steepest* part of the *hill*, and clambered above *Competitions* and *Oppositions* they dare loyter, and take breath: Perchance being come from *places*, where they tasted no *gaine*, a little seemes *much* to them at first, for it is long before a *Christian* conscience overtakes, or *straies* into an *Officers* heart. It may be that out of the generall disease of all men not to love the *memory* of a *predecessor*, they seeke to disgrace them.

them by such easinesse, and make good first impressions, that so having drawen much water to their Mill, they may afterwards grind at ease: For if from the rules of good Horse-manship, they thought it wholesome to jet out in a moderate pace, they should also take up towards their journey's end, not mend their pace continually, and gallop to their Innes-doore, the grave; except perchance their conscience at that time so touch them, that they thinke it an injury and damage both to him that must sell, and to him that must buy the Office after their death, and a kind of dilapidation if they by continuing honest should discredit the place, and bring it to a lower-rent, or under-value.

FINIS.

